

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 PM-07 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 MC-02 IGA-02 L-03 OMB-01 SS-20 NSC-10 PA-04

PRS-01 USIE-00 AID-20 TRSE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

DRC-01 /126 W

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O 161655Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3462

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO CINCPACFLT LONDON IMMEDIATE

COMSIXTHFLT IMMEDIATE

CINCEUR IMMEDIATE

CNO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 5965

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, TS

SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF DER-326 TO TUNISIA

REF: STATE 204357

1. IN VIEW OF USG DECISION TO RESUPPLY ISRAEL WITH ARMS AND DELICATE POSITION IN WHICH THIS PUTS TUNISIANS, I HAVE DECIDED, FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH HIGHEST TUNISIAN AUTHORITIES, TO SIMPLIFY DER TRANSFER CEREMONY. I DISCUSSED MATTER THIS MORNING WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE FARHAT AND HE AGREED IT PREFERABLE TO LOW-KEY TRANSFER AT THIS POINT, SUBJECT TO PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S AGREEMENT. HE STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD WISH TO PROCEED WITH CEREMONIAL PROTION OF TRANSFER AT LATER DATE. HE MENTIONED PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S DESIRE TO DECORATE ADMIRALS WHO HAD BEEN INVITED (WHICH NEWS TO US).

2. THIS AFTERNOON FARHAT CALLED ME TO INDICATE THAT
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PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA HAD AGREED TO A TRANSFER WITH

MINIMUM OF CEREMONY. THIS MEANS ELIMINATION OF OUTSIDE PARTICIPATION (I.E. ATTENDANCE OF ADMIRALS BAGLEY AND GERHARD AND PARTICIPATION BY NAVY BAND AND PHOTOGRAPHIC TEAM). TRANSFER WOULD BE LIMITED TO SIGNATURE CEREMONY AND BRIEF SPEECHES BY MINISTER AND ME. LOCAL TELEVISION WILL BE PRESENT. PLANNED RECEPTIONS WILL NOT BE HELD.

3. I BELIEVE THE FOREGOING IS THE BEST COURSE UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES BUT REGRET INCONVENIENCE THIS LAST-MINUTE CHANGE CAUSES FOR ADMIRALS BAGLEY AND GERHARD. I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT LATER, AFTER DUST SETTLES IN MIDDLE EAST, PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA AND MINISTER FARHAT HAVE INTENTION OF INVITING ADMIRALS BAGLEY, MURPHY AND GERHARD FOR SEPARATE CEREMONY.
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30 JUN 2005

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